

Mr. Roger S. Greene,
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le 19 Juin, 1930

Personal

Dear Roger:

I just come back from a short visit in England, and find your letter of May 27th. You speak of the phrase which I recklessly used: "the arid accuracy of scientists.". Of course I would like to qualify as having some traits of a scientist; therefore, to be consistent I ought to give you an accurate and arid answer which would be to the effect that I don't believe in it very far. Your position is well taken that some scientists are not arid and perhaps more are not accurate, but you should have seen and heard Madame Gerville-Reache in order to get any background since I doubt if she could bear forming part of a background. I was using the arid scientists as a background against which she stood out with all the picturesque vividness of Mary Garden or the great actress Rachel. This isn't accurate.. You tell me that I can't afford to believe all that even the dry scientists say. I should say that in my present job your observation had all the humour of under-statement....

I have not read ^{Dewey} ~~Biswilde~~'s "Quest for Certainty", but I can answer your question as to whether there is not a danger of over-emphasizing that present RF policy of merely promoting Research and trying to avoid doing anything for everyday medical education in clinical medicine. You will remember that there was a time, even since I have been in Paris, when we used to turn down research propositions with just as futile a finality as is the present charge that you raise. I think for the time being we might well emphasize the possibilities in some research undertakings and I see no objection to the use of blinders for a while at least. I don't know that my figure is exactly satisfactory to me because I don't want to give up seeing the other side, although I would be willing to give up doing much with it for a while.

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The present group in New York contains such a large number of men relatively new to the work of the Foundation that the main and immediate problem, in my opinion, is placing before them some of our reflections and some of the concrete problems with which we are faced. I am principally anxious that through the next two or three years' experience they learn to distrust the hard and fast rules whose object is certainly in part, as you say, to lighten the burden of the administrator. When the administrator gets out of the New York office, I find that all these rules become mollified and more flexible. If it is true - as is often said - that knowledge comes and wisdom lingers, I presume that the practical step to take in dealing with Mason, Appleget, Schoehr and the others is in aiding them to acquire knowledge and aiding ourselves to go further in this direction as well. I thought for a while that my main problem was to convince Mason that work should be continued with medical schools or research institutes in medicine. Now I am a little more at ease and it seems the part of common sense to explore the possibilities in the way of aiding research work and to do this rather intensively before I make up my mind regarding what is already something between a suspicion and a predilection. That aid from the RF should be directed both to medical education and to medical research.

then the sense of values +
balance - wisdom -
in time later

I sympathize with your difficulties regarding someone ^{with} whom you can be in direct and satisfactory contact. Your man ^{VPF} seems to be in the position of a candidate running for the Dicky whose one obligation, as you may remember was to do what the last man told him and whose life was therefore conspicuously hectic.

VGH has just blown in from Carlsbad where, he says, he has become greatly rejuvenated by drinking 16 glasses of the poisonous fluid that costs nothing until it is out of the ground; and, incidentally, eating nothing whatever for 10 days. I should feel pretty good on the train coming out of that town, just as a matter of contrast, but even so, I believe there is something in it. We all eat too much, but what are you going to do if your hostess takes your greatest virtue as a personal insult....

Yours sincerely,

AG/st